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Agenda items 17 and 18

The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Identical letters dated 8 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to inform you of the grave and alarming acts of violence and terrorism carried out by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip against Israel in recent days.

During the course of today alone, Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip fired no less than 22 Qassam rockets at Israel. Additionally, a mortar was fired from Gaza into southern Israel. Four Sderot residents were treated for shock, and a warehouse was damaged. In the early afternoon, five more rockets landed near the coastal area south of Ashkelon, one of which struck the grounds of Kibbutz Zikim.

Just two days ago, on Wednesday, 6 February, two young Israeli girls, ages 2 and 11, were wounded by shrapnel after a Qassam rocket slammed into a playground in Kibbutz Be'eri. The rocket narrowly missed the kindergarten building next door to the playground. Fortunately as well, the rocket was fired toward the end of the day, at a time when parents were already picking up their children and the park was beginning to empty. Had the rocket been fired only minutes earlier, the damage and bloodshed would have been far more devastating.

As we have seen recently in the incitement by Hamas leaders for Palestinian terrorists to carry out further acts of violence and terrorism, these attacks are part of a well orchestrated campaign to deliberately kill Israeli civilians and spread terrorism. Moreover, they are backed with the full support of some States in the region, in violation of their obligations under Security Council resolutions. In the light of the continuation of Palestinian terrorism, Israel will continue to defend itself and its citizens, as any other sovereign nation would, as is its right under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

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I should be grateful if you would have the contents of this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17 and 18, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative